

true love, but their romance is ill-fated. Early Earth's unusual and finicky polarity means the lovers can never touch. As intricate and richly imagined as the work of Chris Ware, and leavened with a dry wit that rivals Kate Beaton's in *Hark! A Vagrant*, Isabel Greenberg's debut will be a welcome addition to the thriving graphic novel genre.

.com An Best Book of the Month, December 2013: If *The Encyclopedia of Early Earth* is to be believed, the primitive days of our planet were icy landscapes drawn with thick, stark lines and highlighted with the careful use of bold colors. This beautiful comic, Isabel Greenberg's first, pulls on stories from cultural and religious traditions--Genesis, Nordic legends, Greek myths--as well as the work of other influential cartoonists--Kate Beaton, Seth, Jason--to create something unique and timeless. The stories here are imbued with such wit and heart: Two lovers--one from the North Pole, the other from the South--cannot come within two feet of each other because of their polar magnetization; an old woman defeats a giant with her storytelling; a cartographer is aided by three "genius monkeys from the Island of What." Greenberg uses our familiarity with archetypes to play with our expectations, bending these layered stories into something strange and delightful. *The Encyclopedia of Early Earth* is a journey that takes us from one end of the Earth to the other--just perhaps in the direction you'd least expect. --Kevin Nguyen

From Booklist*Starred * A loving homage to storytelling itself, Greenberg's first graphic novel isn't an encyclopedia at all but an intricately crafted mythology told from within a young man's grand adventure. Split into three beings as a baby, the boy(s) find his (their) way back into one, though he is missing a tiny but crucial piece of his soul. In search of that tiny piece, he journeys farther from the snowy northern lands of his home than anyone before and encounters Greenberg's powerfully realized imaginary cultures. Along the way, he shares and accumulates tales that encompass creation, cataclysm, war, jealousy, and compassion, even as the overarching story follows him and his great love to their own poignant end. Sewing in her own sly humor, Greenberg deeply immerses readers in the themes and lessons of world mythology, but she remarkably never merely apes classic myths the way each of Early Earth's cultures tweaks the same ideas and characters for their own myths is a veritable lesson in comparative theology. Just as essentially evocative is her art, which uses simple, childlike illustrations to channel the power of ancient cave paintings and archetypal images from our own imaginations. A unique, compelling stunner from one to watch. --Jesse Karp

One of Time's Top 10 Fiction Books of 2013 One of National Public Radio's Great Reads of 2013 One of Slate's Best Books of 2013 One of 's Top Ten Books of December 2013 A Top Ten Graphic Novel of 2013, Booklist. "It's a book about many things--love, snow, God, poisoned sausages...but mostly it's a celebration of storytelling itself. Strange and wry and funny and beautifully drawn." ---Mark Haddon, author of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* "Greenberg speaks of storytellers, but she's a great storyteller herself, and it's easy to be pulled into the worlds that she writes, housed neatly by tight drawings in a style that is bright enough to bring these worlds to life, and detached enough to feel a little otherworldly." ---Kate Beaton, author of *Hark! A Vagrant* "The *Encyclopedia of Early Earth* is a delightful accordion of a book. This graphic novel casts a spell like that of Scheherazade--when you sit down with it, prepare to stay until the last page." ---Eowyn Ivey, author of *The Snow Child* "A loving homage to storytelling itself...Sewing her own sly humor, Greenberg deeply immerses readers in the themes and lessons of world mythology...Just as evocative is her art, which uses simple, childlike illustrations to channel the power of ancient cave paintings and archetypal images from our own imaginations. A unique, compelling standout." -- Jesse Karp, Booklist "This little gem of a graphic novel is... Part storybook, part allegory, part meditation on the need for mankind to tell stories, the book manages to encompass all of existence without ever feeling too big for its britches. Never has a story about the primordial world felt so cozy." - A.V. Club "Hugely imaginative and sardonically funny" - Glen Weldon, author of *Superman: The Unauthorized Biography* "Ambitious and impressive enough as a feat of world-building, but it's a good deal more than that. From its gods and ghosts and monsters, a rich and palpably human tale emerges - a sad and unshowily beautiful love story that lands with an emotional impact you likely won't see coming." -- National Public Radio "Hands down the most accomplished and satisfying graphic novel of the year." ---Salon "In all its trapdoored complexity, its stories within stories about stories, *The Encyclopedia of Early Earth* is a funny and touching celebration of the narrative species that we are." --- Slate "It seems most years there is a singular graphic novel release that positions itself above the majority: *Building Stories* (Chris Ware) in 2012, *Habibi* (Craig Thompson) in 2011...I would suggest Isabel Greenberg's book could be that title this year." --- IGN "Utterly charming...a graphic remaining of early Earth that is both a tribute and send-up of the folk tales we know." -- The Buffalo News "Graphic novel lovers will be enamored of Greenberg's breathtaking artwork and the vividness of her apparently boundless imagination... For fans of meta-fictions, her story twists around itself, creating new iterations of ongoing histories. This is mythmaking at its finest, as Greenberg melds ancient oral traditions with her own spectacular interpretations, neatly bringing it all together in the closing pages." -- Shelf Awareness "It's pieced together from bits of the Old Testament, a little Greek mythology, and some of this and that, told as a series of stories that nest and dovetail with one another in a way that is at once unpretentious and straightforward, but also complex, meaty, and ultimately very satisfying... the themes from these stories wrap around each other as a series of simple variations that build to a crescendo of marvelous richness." -Boing Boing "A handsome volume with the intimacy and sweep of a modern fairy tale." Chicago Tribune's Printers Row Journal "An entrancing new graphic novel...Dreamy and thoughtful, yet also sharp and smart, this *Encyclopedia*

conjures visions of an ancient world merely a hairsbreadth from our own." --Florida Weekly"When it was released at the very end of 2013, Isabel Greenberg's *The Encyclopedia of Early Earth* very quickly turned its author from a young cartoonist with a first book to one of the most acclaimed of her generation." - Comic Book Resources"Greenberg's stunning graphic novel, her first, isn't an encyclopedia at all but an intricately crafted mythology told from within a young man's grand adventure."Booklist"[The stories] are all wonderfully real and magical, otherworldly yet familiar."Shelf Awareness Pro